

## **GROTON PUBLIC LIBRARY (GPL)**

*Vanessa Abraham, Director*

GPL.ORG • info@gpl.org • Trustees Monthly Meeting: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7 pm (gpltrustees@gpl.org)  
Main: 978-448-1167 • Children's: 978-448-1168 • Reference: 978-448-8000 • Fax: 978-448-1169

**COVID-19 Challenges.** GPL closed to the public on March 13 with the Town. Despite this, reduced staffing, furloughed library staff, and a frozen operating budget, GPL Staff rose to the occasion to serve its community and was not only one of the first in the state to start contactless curbside service, but one of only a handful providing this direct public service in April and May. As one resident wrote:

*"GPL is ... Unique and exemplary! If you fill out a request form on the Groton Public Library Web site, and if the library has the book on the shelf, they will call ... [and] you can pick up the book at the curb... Groton Public Library is the ONLY library in Massachusetts doing this curb-side delivery! For those of us who prefer a real book, rather than an e-book, it is a delightful lift to the spirit! Virtual hugs and thanks, Groton Library!!" (5/7/2020, Letter to the Editor, Groton Herald)*

### **COVID-19 Services Timeline:**

- March 26, GPL held its first virtual program on Zoom
- April 4, GPL TO GO: Curbside Pick-Up and Groton Delivery Services began, 7 days/week, 10-2
- May 26, as Staff returned to working in the building, hours changed to Tue-Sat, 10-5
- June 16, Children's Window Service opened with Staff providing books, activities, and fun
- In July, minimum staffing lifted; Shelves allowed to return; allowed to fill 3 of 5 open positions
- July 7, Top floor/Reference opened to public by appointment with Staff and workstations

**Pandemic Use.** Curbside transactions (not checkouts): **9,613**. In-person appointments, July-Dec: **1,163**. Children's window transactions, June-Dec: **1,965**. Reference & Readers Advisory (RA) in high demand, with Reference questions up 10% and RA up 332% over 2019, as patrons lost the ability to browse collections on their own and there was no interlibrary borrowing for 4 months. Despite the building being closed 9.5 months, **77,997** items were checked out. Digital ebooks, audiobooks, and video use was up significantly this year at **26,936** uses, **32%** over last year. Every service possible was provided remotely or in person, to support Groton residents of all ages in their time of greatest need.

**Programs.** Programs continued to be very popular, with **7,187** people attending **610** (mostly virtual) events. GPL Staff pivoted quickly to offer a fully online schedule of events, social media activities, first-ever springtime reading programs for kids and teens (QUARAN-TEENS), spring Magic Academy, and much more to meet the escalating community needs for engagement, enrichment, support, and connection.

**Projects.** Library Roof, Emergency Exit and Foundation repairs, and the final phase of Space Redesign: Reference Area were completed. New GPL Mobile Catalog App went live ("MVLC Mobile" in App stores.) Launched first-ever library card application and readers advisory request forms online for remote users.

**Personnel.** Children's Librarian Karen Dunham retired after 13 years of service, and Lauren Sanchez was promoted to Head of Children's Services. Beth Dalal joined the GPL team as Adult Program Coordinator.

**Board of Trustees of the Groton Public Library:** Chair: Marilyn (Mimi) Dabritz (-8/24/20). Vice-Chair/Chair (8/24/20-): Kristen von Campe. Vice-Chair (9/8/20-) Nancy Wilder. Secretary: Mark Gerath. Members: Jane Allen, David Zeiler, and Kate Bettencourt (11/2/20-).



Library Legislative Breakfast, Groton Public Library, Top Floor, February 7, 2020 (pre-COVID).  
Visible at Speakers Table: GPL Trustee David Zeiler, State Senator Edward J. Kennedy, State Representative Sheila Harrington, State Board of Library Commissioners Chair Roland Ochsenbein, and GPL Patron Speaker Grace Remillard. [Far left, view of hands only: State Library System Executive Director Sarah Sogigian]



GPL To Go Bags Ready for Curbside Pickup fill the lobby, July 1, 2020 [COVID Pandemic]